

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LOME 00543 171921Z
ACTION AF-10

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O 171715Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY LOME
TO SECSTATE WBSHDC IMMEDIATE 3601

C O N F I D E N T I A L L O M E 543

AF FOR ASST SECRETARY MOOSE FROM AMBASSADOR PALMER

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP TO (EYADEMA, GENERAL GNASSINGBE)
SUBJ: PRESIDENT EYADEMA EXPRESSES OFFICIAL WISH TO VISIT
UNITED STATES

1. I WAS CALLED BY FOREIGN MINISTER EDEM KODJO AT 1600
TODAY AND ASKED TO COME IMMEDIATELY TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY.
I DID SO AND KODJO RECEIVED ME WARMLY AND ASKED ME TO
SIT DOWN BESIDE HIM WHILE HE CONTINUED SIGNING PAPERS
BEFORE LEAVING TODAY FOR THE OAU MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
IN TRIPOLI.

2. HE SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD TOLD HIM TO CAL ME
AND REQUEST OFFICIALLY THAT "AMBASSADOR PALMER WRITE THE AMERICAN
AUTHORITIES TO SAY THAT I WISH TO VISIT THE UNITED STATES OFFICIALLY
THIS YEAR."

3. WHEN KODJO GOT DONE I LOOKED AT HIM AND I ASKED HIM
IF THAT WAS THE ENTIRE MESSAGE. THE FOREIGN MINISTER
SAID THAT WAS ALL THE PRESIDENT HAD SAID. KODJO SAID A
PERSONAL LETTER FROM PRESIDENT EYADEMA TO
PRESIDENT CARTER WOULD FOLLOW SOON.

4. I BEGAN EXPLAINING THE REALITIES OF WASHINGTON AND
THE PROBLEM OF OBTAINING OFFICIAL VISITS TO KODJO AND
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HE WAVED A WAN HAND SAYING THAT HE KNEW THAT WHAT THE
PRESIDENT WISHED TO DO WAS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT, IF NOT
IMPOSSIBLE, BUT HE HAD BEEN DIRECTED TO REQUEST
ME TO MAKE AN OFFICIAL DEMARCHE AND HE WAS FOLLOWING UP
ON HIS INSTRUCTIONS.

5. I SAID THAT IN VIEW OF THE FACT THE FOREIGN MINISTER,

AND THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, AND THE TOGOLESE AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON WERE AWARE OF THE PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES OF ARRANGING OFFICIAL VISITS, THAT I COULD SEE NO USEFUL PURPOSE IN REVIEWING PROBLEMS WHICH THE TECHNICAL LEVEL OF THE GOVERNMENT OF TOGO ALREADY UNDERSTOOD. ACCORDINGLY, I SAID I WOULD TRANSMIT THE MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT EYADEMA AS RECEIVED.

6. COMMENT: AS THE DEPARTMENT AND THE WHITE HOUSE ARE AWARE BY NOW, PRESIDENT EYADEMA IS A FORCEFUL MAN WHO BELIEVES IN DIRECT ACTION. HIS RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT IS ESTABLISHED: HE IS THE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE OF THE ECOWAS HEADS OF STATE AUTHORITY AND A FOUNDING FATHER OF THAT ORGANIZATION; HE IS PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE ENTENTE; AND HE IS A VICE PRESIDENT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY. HE REPRESENTS A SMALL NATION, BUT HE PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE COUNCILS OF AFRICA. HE HAS NOT VISITED THE UNITED STATES IN HIS ELEVEN YEARS OF RULE. PALMER

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